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### Ted Falacy reminisces about Forester's Ball

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# UM news

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IMMEDIATELY

TED FALACY REMINISCES  
ABOUT FORESTER'S BALL

smith/jg  
1/5/79  
special dailies

MISSOULA--

By Jeff Smith  
UM Senior

The approach of the 62nd Forester's Ball at the University of Montana, scheduled Friday and Saturday, Jan. 12 and 13, at 8 p.m. in the Men's Gym, stirs memories of the 61 bashes that preceded it.

Ted Falacy is a 72-year-old native of New York who came to Missoula over 40 years ago. A graduate of the University's forestry school himself, Ted was glad to share some of his Forester's Ball memories.

"I came to the University in 1932. They had just gotten rid of the trolley cars here," he said.

Ted lived in a one-room shack with three other students on the University Nursery, which was located on the site of the present Harry Adams Field House. He drove a Model T back and forth to visit his girlfriend Betty on the other side of town.

"The police finally pulled out the coil box," he said. "I didn't have enough money to license it. It was the depression you know. I worked as a lab assistant in the forestry school for 35 cents per hour and lucky to get it!"

It was during the depression that Ted married Betty. After Ted's three roommates moved out, he and Betty moved into the shack on the University Nursery. They attended at least six Forester's Balls before he graduated. Being a married student qualified Betty for the elite Dames Club on campus. It was a club solely for married students and Betty was one of only nine members.

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Was the Forester's Ball a big event in the 1930's?

"The big event!" Betty said. "Two weeks before the Ball there would be big red and blue footprints painted on the sidewalks all over town. They symbolized Paul Bunyan and the Blue Ox and everyone knew the Forester's Ball was coming up," she said.

Ted devoted his spare time, like most foresters, to cutting down trees to be used for decorating the gym.

"That took up most of the Christmas vacation," he said. "You couldn't even recognize the gym when we finished. But we would always spend the most time on the Ranger's Delight--that was special."

Just what was the Ranger's Delight?

"That was always the most fun to build. We decorated the wrestling room with trees and put in a real waterfall. That's where couples would go when they got tired of dancing and, well..." Ted blushed, "well, you know."

While most of the foresters were preoccupied with construction, others were busy selling tickets.

"Tickets were always special," said Betty, "I remember one year they were printed on small wood chips made to look like logs. They only sold about 200."

You could bring your own alcohol to the Ball in the 1930's and food was served to those who were hungry.

"They'd take us in shifts over to the forestry school where they had soup or perhaps a loggers' stew," Betty said. "Everyone would drink but nobody got real bad....at least no one we knew."

Times have changed since the 1930's. Ted and Betty used to be able to get a meal at the Home Cafe on Higgins for 25 cents or go to a movie for the same price. But except for some minor improvements the Ball has remained the same. In 1932 just over 200 people attended the Ball. Last year 1,500 people passed through the doors.

Bands like Bob Dudley's or Ray Thraillkill's from the past may be gone but there's sure to be some good foot stompin' bluegrass when Poor Monroe takes the stage. And you may not be able to find the Ranger's Delight anymore, but if you look hard enough you should be able to find its modern day counterpart, the passion pit. See you there.

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